

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 SAM-01 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 /130 W

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P R 060827Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3800

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5104

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, IS

SUBJECT: COALITION TALKS

REF: TEL AVIV 5022(NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. IN WINNING LABOR PARTY APPROVAL SEPT 4 TO CONTINUE TALKS TO BRING NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY INTO COALITION, PM RABIN HOPES TO BROADEN POLITICAL BASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT AND DEFUSE STRENGTH OF RADICAL ELEMENTS IN NRP. RABIN'S EFFORTS TO BRING NRP INTO COALITION MAY STRENGTHEN HIS DESIRE TO NEGOTIATE NEXT WITH EGYPT RATHER THAN JORDAN. END SUMMARY.

2. LABOR PARTY EXECUTIVE BUREAU AND KNESSET FACTION SEPT 4 APPROVED BY 24-5 VOTE MOTION INTRODUCED BY PM RABIN TO CONTINUE COALITION TALKS WITH NRP, ON BASIS OF PROPOSAL BY NRP TO SUSPEND REGISTRATION OF CONVERTED JEWISH IMMIGRANTS IN POPULATION REGISTRY FOR ONE YEAR PENDING SOLUTION OF "WHO IS A JEW?" ISSUE.

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3. IN VIGOROUS PLEA FOR ADOPTION OF MOTION, RABIN, WHILE

NOTING THAT GOVERNMENT COULD SURVIVE WITH PRESENT 61 VOTES, STRESSED NEED TO BROADEN PARLIAMENTARY BASE IN FACE OF SERIOUS INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PROBLEMS FACING NATION IN MONTHS AHEAD. RABIN EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN THAT IF NRP CONTINUES IN OPPOSITION, IT WOULD BE DRAWN AWAY FROM ITS "TRADITIONAL LINE" INTO RADICAL POSITION. HE STATED HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE EVEN BROADER COALITION, BUT CONDITIONS DO NOT EXIST AS YET TO EXPAND BEYOND NRP. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, HE SAID THAT RECENT EFFORTS TO WIN LIBERAL PARTY AWAY FROM LIKUD PRODUCED NO RESULTS.

4. RABIN STATED THAT IF NRP ENTERS COALITION GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE ITS PRESENT COALITION POLICY LINE, STRIVING TO REACH PEACE SETTLEMENT. IF SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE REACHED WITH JORDAN, NEW ELECTIONS WOULD BE CALLED, AS ALREADY AGREED.

5. RABIN INDICATED THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD INFORMALLY THAT NRP WOULD HAVE A MAJORITY IN SUPPORT OF ENTERING COALITION ON BASIS OF PROPOSED FORMULA.

6. OPPOSITION TO MOTION CAME MAINLY FROM LABOR PARTY "DOVES" UNCOUNTED NUMBER OF ABSTENTIONS INCLUDED INFORMATION MINISTER YARIV. ALL OTHER CABINET MINISTERS SUPPORTED RABIN.

7. LABOR PARTY DECISION ESSENTIALLY FORMALIZES CONTINUATION OF TALKS WHICH HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY FOR PAST WEEKS BY LABOR PARTY LEADERS WITH NRP AND CURRENT COALITION PARTNERS. WHILE CITIZENS RIGHTS MOVEMENT HAS THREATENED TO LEAVE COALITION IF NRP JOINS, MAPAM AND INDEPENDENT LIBERAL PARTY LEADERS HAVE INDICATED LIKELY SUPPORT OF NEW FORMULA ENABLING NRP TO JOIN COALITION.

8. NEXT MAJOR STEP IN ADVANCING COALITION TALKS IS FROMAL APPROVAL BY NRP OF NEW FORMULA. GENERAL ASSESSMENT IS THAT NRP, IN VIEW OF IT SBADLY ERODING POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL SITUATION, WILL MUSTER MAJORITY. SHOULD NRP APPROVE NEW BASIS FOR ENTERING COALITION, SERIOUS TALKS WILL BEGIN AFTER PM RABIN'S RETURN FROM UNITED STATES, ALTHOUGH FIRST FORMAL NRP MEETING WITH RABIN SCHEDULED SEPT 8. FINAL LABOR PARTY APPROVAL OF NEW COALITION RESTS WITH SOME 600 MEMBER CENTRAL

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COMMITTEE, WHICH WE EXPECT WILL SUPPORT RABIN.

9. IT IS RECOGNIZED ON ALL SIDES THAT NEW FORMULA ENABLING NRP TO JOIN COALITION ONLY DEFERS THE FUNDAMENTAL GOAL OF FINDING ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION TO "WHO IS A JEW?" ISSUE CONCERNING RECOGNITION IN ISRAEL OF JEWISH CONVERSIONS BY VARIOUS STREAMS OF WORLD JEWRY.

10. COMMENT: STRONG EFFORTS BY RABINTO BRING NRP INTO
GOVERNMENT PENDING RESOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS ARE DOUBTLESS
AIMED
AS HE IMPLIED AT STRENGTHENING MODERATE ELEMENTS OF NRP,
POSSIBLY WOOING DISSIDENT FACTIONS IN LIKUD TO SUPPORT GOVERN-
MENT, AND GAINING BROADER POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR HIS CONTINUATION
AT HELM OF GOVERNMENT.
CURRENT EFFORTS TO BRING NRP INTO COALITION ARE BOUND SOMEWHAT
TO AFFECT ISRAELI THINKING ABOUT PEACE NEGOTIATION
STRATEGY. WHETHER OR NOT IT IS A COINCIDENCE THAT TIMING
OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS COINCIDES WITH RABIN'S WASHINGTON
TRIP, ARGUMENT CAN BE EXPECTED THAT THEY REPRESENT AN
ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION FOR DEFERRING NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN
UNTIL AFTER SOME AGREEMENT MAY HAVE BEEN REACHED WITH
EGYPT.
VELIOTES

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